

K Herbert (A) Earl of Torrington

THE
Earl of Torrington's
SPEECH
TO THE
House of Commons,
In November, 1690.

Occasion'd by the Ingagement at Sea
on the 30th of June that Year,
between the Confederate and
French Fleets.

To which is prefix'd,
A Draught of the Line of Battel, curiously
engraven on Copper.

LONDON;

Printed in the Year M. DCC. X.

THE
GOV. OF TORONTO

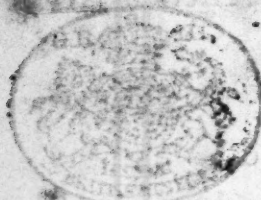
SPECIAL

TO THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS

In Response to

Order of the House of Commons
on the 17th of June 1874
relative to the
Trade of the



To which is added
A Draft of the Bill
relative to the

Trade of the

1874

Printed by

The Publisher to the R E A D E R.

THE following Speech
falling into my hands by
Accident, and being
pleas'd with the History it re-
lates; I thought it might give
the World a great deal of Satis-
faction if it were made publick.
And to render it the more useful,
I have procur'd a Draught of the
Line of Battel, to which it re-
fers, and by which they who are
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truer Judgment of the matter.

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THE
Earl of Torrington's
 SPEECH
 TO THE
 House of Commons, &c.

Mr. SPEAKER,



Have never till now regretted my not being bred to Letters, that I find I want words to express the Sense I have of this great Favour done me, in admitting me to a hearing before this Honourable House: It is an Act becoming their Greatness and their Justice, and the more because I have not been able
 to

to obtain it any where else : It is a Favour I must own with all imaginable respect to the last moment of my Life. And that I may not abuse their Goodness by taking up too much of their time, I humbly beg leave I may, in as few words as may be, give an Account of my Misfortunes, and their Original Causes, which I think in some measure concern the Nation.

Mr. SPEAKER,

I find my self under a greater Misfortune than possibly ever any Man was, and possibly as undeservedly. I have been a Prisoner ever since the 10th of July, without ever being told what I was committed for, till within these few days : That in the Marshal's Warrant I find my self charg'd with withdrawing and keeping back from the Enemy, and not assisting a known Friend in view ; were it true, I wou'd not have been
desirous

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desirous to come before this Honorable House, nor wou'd I desire to outlive a deserv'd Disgrace one moment.

Mr. SPEAKER,

It is now no time to pick Quarrels one with another, we have Enemies enough abroad: it is therefore I will shun making Reflections, but where they are absolutely necessary for my Country's safety and my own Justification; and will not look back further than this Year,

Under these following Heads, viz.

That our Preparation was too late.

That our Fleet was too weak.

That our Fleet was ill mann'd.

That the *French* were not prevented making a Descent at *Cork*.

That we wanted Intelligence, or did not believe it when given.

That

That we were forc'd to fight contrary to the Opinion of the Council of War.

That the Fight was manag'd to the best advantage for the Kingdom's Safety.

That our Preparation was too late, I need give but two Instances.

1st. That we were not in a condition to prevent the Descent at *Cork*: If we were, I'm sure nothing can excuse our not doing it, nor our not destroying the *French* Fleet that for several Weeks lay there, and had all that time most of our Transport-Ships at their mercy.

2^{ly}. That all our Ships were not compleatly fitted by the middle of *June*, nor mann'd as they shou'd be the whole Year.

Here I must beg leave to observe, That in the War with *Holland* against a Protestant Enemy, our Fleets were out in *April*; and against the *French*, a Papist

Papist Enemy, we can hardly get them out in *June*.

That we were too weak, 'tis apparent, since all our Fleet consisted but of 56 Ships and 20 Fireships; and the *French* had 82 and 30 Fireships, of which 17 were three-deckt Ships, most of the rest from 60 Guns upwards, very few of 50 Guns, and I dare say not under. The Disproportion of the Guns I believe will not be found much less than 2000, possibly more.

I never heard but two Reasons given for our preparing a weak Fleet; to me they are very odd: That if we arm out a strong Fleet, the *French* will not come out: And if we fit out all our First and Second Rates, what will be left in Harbour?

Another Instance of our being too weak, even in the Opinion of some of those Lords that advis'd the *Battel*, is, That the States were desir'd

to fit out twelve Capital Ships; and if I remember right, as many were order'd here, which join'd to Admiral Killigrew, Sir Cloudesly Shovel, and Captain Saunders, wou'd have made our Fleet above 30 Ships stronger than when we engag'd. I think I may give this one Instance more, The Preparation for the next Year, which, if I am rightly inform'd, is to consist of 4 First Rates, 11 Second, and 33 Third Rates, and I think 12 Fourth, and 35 Dutch, which in the whole makes 95; which is 39 more in Number than we had when we engag'd.

That our Fleet was ill mann'd, is a known Truth; and that the French were well mann'd, is evident by their Firing, generally speaking, three Guns for our two.

And if it shou'd appear, that at the same time many Seamen were protected, 'tis likely there is a fault somewhere. That

That we were not in a Condition to prevent the Descent at *Cork*, or to destroy the *French* Fleet whilst it lay there, is it may be a very great Mis-carriage. I am sure it was a very great Misfortune, and might have been more fatal: for had they destroy'd our Transport-Ships in those Seas, it is not likely his Majesty wou'd have been able to have gone into *Ireland* this Year; and I'm afraid he wou'd have found more difficulty in reducing it the next Year. And if the last Descent had been prevented, it is certain his Majesty had neither been expos'd to so many Dangers as he was, nor wou'd have met with those Difficultys he did. From which I think it may be concluded, that fewer Men wou'd have been lost, less Treasure expended, and *Ireland* wholly reduc'd, if that Fleet had been destroy'd in *Cork*, as surely it might, if we had had Ships ready. The late Insult, which some call a Disgrace,

had not only been prevented, but the *French* put by the Possibility, during the whole War, of setting any Fleet to Sea, considerable enough to give us either Care or Trouble. What Excuse can be made for it, I do not well know; but I am sure it is not want of Admonition, for I appeal to many concern'd in it, whether it was not foreseen and foretold several Months before the Descent of the *French*, and the time it was made.

Lest any of these Matters shou'd be laid to my Charge, I think it necessary to acquaint this Honourable House, That not seeing Matters go so well in the Admiralty as I thought the Service requir'd, and that it was not in my Power to prevent it, I humbly beg'd, and obtain'd the King's Leave to be dismiss'd from that Commission, and giving any further Attendance at that Board; that since I cou'd not prevent the Mischiefs, I might have no share in the blame.

That

That we wanted Intelligence.

Some think that in some measure I am chargeable with it. Surely they do not mean before I came to the Fleet, which was not till the 30th of May; and from that time forward we had always Ships at Sea, not only as Scouts, but some ever upon the Coast of *France*. It is said we had no Scouts out when the *French* appear'd, and it is very true; nor is it my fault: for all our Ships Boats being employ'd to fetch the Earl of *Pembroke's* Regiment, I desir'd the *Dutch*, who had the Outguard, to take that care upon them: And it seems those that Vice-Admiral *Callembergh* had appointed for that Service delay'd it, to take in some Necessarys at the Isle of *Wight*. And it is certain, that the first notice I had of the *French*, was by the appearance of five of their Scouts.

I thought, and still think, that the material Intelligence is the Strength
of

of an Enemy's Preparation, and how that is to be employ'd. If we had any such Intelligence, it has been conceal'd from me; for the first notice I had of Monsieur de Chattean-Renaut's joining the French Fleet, was the sight of his Flag flying off the Isle of Wight. And I have reason to believe the Secretary knew of the Conjunction; for I can produce a Gentleman that says he told him so: And I am sure the Noble Lord, whose province it is, has always by his discourse endeavour'd to persuade me to a belief that the French wou'd not come out with a considerable Strength. And I appeal to him, whether I did not tell him, when I had urg'd many Reasons for strengthening our Fleet, which he only answer'd with, *You will be strong enough for the French*: 'My Lord, I know my business, and will do my best with what I have; but pray remember it is not my fault the Fleet

is

' is no stronger. I own I am afraid
 ' now in Winter, whilst the Danger
 ' may be remedy'd; and you will be
 ' afraid in Summer, when it is past
 ' remedy.' I cou'd say more upon
 this Subject, had I not confin'd my
 self to this Year.

That we were forc'd to fight, con-
 trary to the Opinion of the whole
 Council of War, is very plain by
 these following Letters, and her Ma-
 jesty's Orders, viz.

My LORD,

' **B**Y several Letters I have had
 ' notice yesterday and to day
 ' of the French Fleet being sail'd East-
 ' ward; the latest is dated eight a
 ' clock this morning, and says they
 ' were at anchor in Compton-Bay, at
 ' the back of the Isle of Wight, in
 ' number 120. We sail'd this mor-
 ' ning, but the Wind taking us short,
 ' we are not far from Donnose. If
 ' the

' the *French* have continu'd their Sta-
 ' tion, we are not above five Leagues
 ' asunder. Our Fleet consists of 50
 ' Men of War and 20 Fireships: the
 ' Odds are great, and you know it
 ' is not my fault; to morrow pro-
 ' bably will be the deciding Day.
 ' Let them tremble at the conse-
 ' quence, whose fault it was the Fleet
 ' is no stronger; for my part, I will
 ' with God Almighty's help do my
 ' Duty, and I hope every body here
 ' will do so too. If we are to expect
 ' any more *Dutch*, I hope they will
 ' be hasten'd to us: It is not impos-
 ' sible they may come time enough
 ' for a share, because the Sea is sub-
 ' ject to Accidents. We have as yet
 ' but 18 *Dutch* with us, after all *De-*
 ' *wilt's* great Promises: I am

' Your Lordship's, &c.

To the Right Ho-
 nourable the E.
 of Nottingham.

Near Donnose, June
 23. 1690.

' My

MY LORD,

EVERY day since my last we have been in sight of the French Fleet. Tuesday we were strengthen'd with Admiral Evertsons, two Dutch, and two English Men of War, in all five. Wednesday morning with the day we got under sail with 55 Men of War and 20 Fireships, the Wind Easterly, with intention to attack the French, but the morning prov'd so hazy, that we were forc'd to anchor again. The Wind came about to the Southwest, and in half an hour it clear'd up again. Then we saw the French Fleet in a Line under sail about three Leagues from us to the Windward. We got immediately under sail, and stood upon a Line to the Southward, the Blue having the Van. The Wind favouring us a little, I saw a probability of weathering two Thirds of the

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French

' French Fleet, and made a sign for
 ' the Fleet to tack, which they ac-
 ' cordingly did, and stood directly
 ' with them; the French tack'd, and
 ' stood from us, and went a point
 ' or two from the Wind till night :
 ' Both Fleets then anchor'd. It is
 ' unaccountable why the French shun'd
 ' us; for tho they had many Ships
 ' to Leeward and scatter'd, they had
 ' enough in a body to have given
 ' us more than sufficient work. I do
 ' acknowledg my first Intention of
 ' attacking them a Rashness that will
 ' admit of no better excuse, than
 ' that tho I did believe them stronger
 ' than we are, I did not believe it
 ' to so great a degree. I find by
 ' their manner of working, that not-
 ' withstanding their Strength they act
 ' with some caution, and seem to be
 ' willing to add to the Advantage of
 ' Force that of Wind too. Their
 ' great Strength and Caution have
 ' put soberer Thoughts into my
 ' head,

'head, and have made me very hear-
 'tily give God thanks they declin'd
 'the Battell yesterday. And indeed
 'I shall not think my self very un-
 'happy, if I can get rid of them
 'without fighting, unless it may be
 'upon equal terms than for the
 'present I can see any prospect of.
 'I find I am not the only Man of
 'that Opinion; for a Council of
 'War I call'd this morning unani-
 'mously agreed, we are by all man-
 'ner of means to than fighting with
 'them, especially if they have the
 'Wind of us; and retire, if we can-
 'not avoid it otherwise, even to the
 'Gulf, the only place we can with
 'any manner of probability make
 'our party good with them in the
 'Condition we are in. We have now
 'had a pretty good View of their
 'Fleet, which consists of near, if
 'not quite, 80 Men of War fit to
 'lie in a Line, and thirty Fireships:
 'A Strength that puts me besides the

' Hopes of Success if we shou'd
 ' fight, and really may not only en-
 ' danger the losing of the Fleet, but
 ' at least the Quiet of our Country
 ' too; for if we are beaten, they
 ' being absolute Masters of the Sea,
 ' will be at great liberty of doing
 ' many things they dare not attempt
 ' whilst we observe them, and are in
 ' a possibility of joining Vice-Admi-
 ' ral *Killigrew* and our Ships to the
 ' Westward. If I find a possibility,
 ' I will get by them to the West-
 ' ward to join those Ships; if not,
 ' I mean to follow the Resul^t of the
 ' Council of War. In the mean
 ' time, I wish there might be speedy
 ' Orders given to fit out with speed
 ' whatever Ships of War are in the
 ' River of *Chatham*; and that the
 ' Ships to the Westward proceed
 ' to *Portsmouth*; and from thence,
 ' if the *French* come before the Ri-
 ' ver, they may join us over the
 ' Flats. This is the best Advice I
 ' can

can give at present; but had I been believ'd in Winter, the Kingdom had not receiv'd this Insult. Your Lordship now knows the Opinion of the Flag-Officers of both Dutch and English Fleets, which I desire you will lay before her Majesty; and to assure her, that if she has other Considerations, whenever she pleases to signify her Pleasure, her Commands shall be punctually obey'd, the Consequence be what it will.

To the Earl of
Nottingham.

Off the Isle of Wight,
June 26. 1690.

M A R I E R.

RIGHT Trusty and Right Well-Beloved Cousin and Counsellor, We greet you well. We have heard your Letter dated June 26. to our Secretary of State, and do not doubt of your Skill and Conduct in this important Conjunction; to take all Opportunities of Advantage against
the

the Enemy: But we apprehend the Consequences of your retiring to the Gunfleet to be so fatal, that We chuse rather you should upon any advantage of the Wind give battel to the Enemy, than retreat further than is necessary to get an Advantage upon the Enemy. But in case you find it necessary to go to the Westward of the French Fleet, in order to the better joining with our Ships from Plymouth, or any others coming from the Westward; We leave it to your Discretion, so as you by no means ever lose sight of the French Fleet, whereby they may have Opportunitys of making Attempts upon the Shore, or in the Rivers of Medway or Thames, or get away without fighting. And so We bid you heartily farewell. Given at our Court at Whitehall, this 29th Day of June, 1690. In the Second Year of Our Reign.

By Her Majesty's Command.

To Our Right Trusty and Right Well-
Beloved Cousin and Counsellor,
Arthur Earl of Torrington, &c.

My

My LORD,

THE inclosed Order from the Queen, was prepar'd with the Advice of the Committee of Council; and is necessary to acquaint you with some Particulars of which we have an Account.

Sir William Jennings is on board of the French Admiral, and examin'd some Prisoners (whom they took off of Weymouth, and set on shore in the Isle of Wight) what the Number of our Fleet was: and they saying 90 Sail of Men of War, he was in great rage, and threaten'd to hang them for lying, for that he was sure we had but 30 Ships together; for the Dutch were not come, Killigrew in the Straits, and Shovel in the Irish Seas: And that they came to destroy our Fleet thus divided, first at Portsmouth, and then in the River. And they were extremely discourag'd upon hearing the Salutes, when they were told

told that it must be upon the arrival of the *Dutch Ships*. And we have further Information, that they are very ill man'd: And tho your Lordship, that has seen them, may better judge of their Number, than we can by any Advice from *France*; yet I have seen Letters from one, who in company with others was very near their Fleet: and they all say that they counted them twelve times, and could never make them more than 103 or 104 of all Rates; of which they say positively, there was not above 60 Ships that could stand in a Line.

The Ships from *Plymouth* sail'd thence on Monday morning last; so that if they are not already with you, they must be very near.

Sir *Cloudefly Shovel* sail'd from *Bel-fast* at three of the clock in the morning of the 18th instant; so that he also cannot be far from you.

By

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By Letters from Vice-Admiral Killigrew, dated May 26. from Cadiz. I find he intended to sail in a few days, and return according to his Orders.

So that upon the whole, if you shou'd retire to the *Gunfleet*, the Ships from *Plymouth*, if not join'd with you, and Sir *Cloudefly Shovel*, and all the Ships returning from *Ireland*, and Vice-Admiral *Killigrew* with that Squadron, and a rich Fleet of Merchant-Men, will all be expos'd to inevitable Ruin. And besides, the *French* may have opportunity of going with their whole Fleet, or sending such part as they think fit to *Scotland*, where they are expected; and we have too good reason to apprehend Disturbances.

I wish you all imaginable Success, and am with great Respect,

My LORD,

Your Lordship's, &c.

Nottingham.

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*I have not time to take a Copy
of this Letter ; and lest I might
have occasion to refer to it when I
write again, I pray your Lordship
to order your Secretary to send
me a Copy by this Messenger.*

My LORD,

I This minute receiv'd her Ma-
jesty's Orders, which I will (so
soon as I can get the Flag-Officers
on board) communicate to them :
I am very certain that they all will,
with my self, with great Chearful-
ness give due Obedience to her
Commands.

Now in answer to your Lord-
ship's, I infer from the Examina-
tion of the Prisoners they took off
of Weymouth, and set on shore at
the Isle of Wight, that the French
are as strong as we take them to
be ; for were they not so strong,
or under any consternation, I can-
not think they would have put any
body ashore to bring us the news
of

' of it, but quietly have retir'd: for
 ' if they do not think they have the
 ' Advantage, I am yet to learn what
 ' can move them to stay, having for
 ' several days had a fair Wind to
 ' carry them off. And, my Lord,
 ' notwithstanding your Advice from
 ' *France*, I take them to be 80 Men
 ' of War strong. How they are
 ' mann'd indeed I am not able to
 ' judg; but I am credibly inform'd
 ' by some *French* Prisoners, who were
 ' took in a small Bark, that they are
 ' well mann'd, and that the *Thoulon*
 ' Ships are now with them. Had we
 ' had *Killigrew* with us, the Match
 ' had been a little more equal. I
 ' cannot comprehend that *Killigrew*,
 ' the Merchant-Ships, *Shovel*, or the
 ' *Plymouth* Ships can run much ha-
 ' zard if they take any care of them-
 ' selves: for whilst we observe the
 ' *French*, they cannot make any At-
 ' tempt either upon Ships or Shore,
 ' without running a great hazard; and

if we are beaten, all is expos'd to
 their Mercy. 'Tis very possible I
 reason wrong, but I do assure you
 I can and will obey. Pray God di-
 rect all for the best. I send your
 Lordship a Copy inclos'd of your
 Letter to me. Pray, my Lord,
 assure her Majesty, that all that can
 be done by Men in our Circum-
 stances, shall be done for her Ser-
 vice. I am, &c.

To the Earl of Nottingham.

Off of Beachy, June 29. 1690.

That our Fighting upon so great
 disadvantage as we did, was of the
 last consequence to the Kingdom, is
 as certain, as that the Queen cou'd
 not have been prevail'd with to sign
 an Order for it, had not both our
 Weakness and the Strength of the E-
 nemy been disguis'd to her: The
 Secretary's Letter, dated June 27. is
 one good Instance, where to me,
 who knew and saw the contrary, he
 affirms

affirms the *French* had but 60 Sail cou'd stand in the Line.

It is true, the *French* made no great Advantage of their Victory, tho they put us to a great Charge in keeping up the Militia; but had I fought otherwise, our Fleet had been totally lost, and the Kingdom had lain open to an Invasion. What then wou'd have become of us in the Absence of his Majesty, and most of the Land-Forces? As it was, most Men were in fear that the *French* wou'd invade; but I was always of another Opinion, which several Members of this Honourable House can witness: for I always said, that whilst we had a Fleet in being, they wou'd not dare to make an Attempt.

In my Letter of the 29th of June, the matter is stated pretty plain: Whilst we observe the *French*, they can make no Attempt either on Sea or Shore, but with great disadvantage; and if we are beaten, all is expos'd

to

to their Mercy. This I dare be bold to say, That if the management of the Fleet had been left to the discretion of the Council of War, there wou'd have been no need of the excessive Charge the Kingdom was put to in keeping up the Militia, nor wou'd the *French* have gone off so much at their ease.

There are very few Instances of Orders to fight against the Opinion of the General, but none that I know of contrary to the unanimous Opinion of a Council of War. I remember but one Instance of the first in former Ages, which was *Hannibal's* being commanded against his Judgment to fight with *Scipio*, and that when his Country lay at stake too. The Parallel is pretty near, I find only this difference, that by his misfortune in the total Loss of the Battel, his Country was ruin'd, and ours preserv'd by my Care and Caution; *Carthage* ow'd her Ruin to the Counsels of
Hanno :

Hanno: I submit to the Wisdom of this Honourable House to consider the Parallel.

That the Battel was manag'd to the best advantage for the Kingdom's Safety, will best appear by the following relation of the Battel, and the Answers to several Objections I have been told some People make.

Monday the 30th of June, about four a Clock in the Morning, the Wind at N. N. E. I order'd Capt. No-
vill to bear down upon the French Fleet that lay at Anchor about S. W. from us, between three and four Leagues. Soon after the French weigh'd, and I order'd the Signal to be made to draw our Fleet into the Line of Battel. About eight we came pretty near the Enemy, that lay in a Line to receive us: I then observ'd that Monsieur Tourville had but 34 or 35 Ships a-head of him, and 46 or 47 a-stern of him; and that our Van consisted of 33, and our Rear of

22. I alter'd my Resolution of engaging Monsieur *Tourville* my self, and steer'd away with his Vice-Admiral, that our Rear might not be so much overprest with odds. As we drew nearer, I observ'd the *French* Fleet lay in a Byte or Bent, and that their Rear was the Weathermost part of their Fleet. I steer'd away a more Southerly Course nearest S. S. W. for two Reasons: The First to bring the Line to ingage with the Sternmost and Weathermost Ships; the Second to prevent my being weather'd by them. About eight I order'd the Signal for Battel, to prevent the *Dutch* steering to the Southward, as I did; for by the eighth Article of the fighting Instructions, when that Signal is made, the headmost Ships of our Fleet are to steer away with the headmost Ships of the Enemy. My reason for it was, to make an Interval in the middle of our Fleet, judging that it was less dangerous to leave that

that part of the Enemy's Line uncover'd than any other. About nine the *Dutch* engag'd about the distance of Cannon-shot, and Vice-Admiral *Ashby* soon after, and the *Blue* not long after that, as likewise Rear-Admiral *Rook*. It was near ten before I engag'd, because by the Bent in the *French* I was at a greater distance than the rest, and that I gave positive Orders not to fire till we were within a fit distance to do good execution; nor did we engage, tho several Shot flew over us, till a Man was kill'd. We continu'd nearing the Enemy, till we were about half Cannon-shot, the Enemy still bearing away two, three, and sometimes four Points from the Wind. About eleven, seeing the Enemy had pretty well straiten'd their Line, and that there was not so much danger of being weather'd in the Rear, I had a mind to see a little of what pass'd in the Van; in order to it, I sent to the

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Duke

Duke of *Grafton* and Sir *Francis Wheeler* to make sail, and close the Line forward: I sent my Boat twice upon that Errand. Upon the second Return of the Boat, I saw, I think it was, eleven Sail of the *French* that had weather'd the *Dutch*. Being ask'd by Captain *Nevil*, whether I would suffer them to weather me too? I told him, No, if I can help it; and order'd (not knowing how many would follow) the Foretack to be got on board, and to stand with them. Upon which Motion they bore round up to Leeward of the *Dutch* again. About One, I saw several of Sir *John Ashby's* Division, and his own Ship, and several of the *Dutch* disabled, and towing off from the Enemy: Soon after it fell calm. Monsieur *Tourville* about that time drove with his Ship, and four or five more, pretty near to two disabled Ships of the *Dutch*, and gall'd them cruelly. I sent to them to anchor, and by
the

the help of the Tide tow'd between all but one of the disabled Ships and the Enemy, and there anchor'd; and took in the Sign of Battel. That single Ship for want of anchoring fell into the Enemy's hands. Seeing that several of the *Dutch* and *English* were disabled, and none of the *French*, I resolv'd to make the best Retreat I cou'd; and in order to it, order'd those that were in the best condition for it, to take the lame Ships in a Tow: and with the Tide of Flood, we weigh'd and drove to the Eastward. Tuesday it was resolv'd, That if the *French* press'd us, we should, rather than hazard a Battel, destroy all the lame Ships that were in danger of falling into the Enemy's hands; which accordingly was done, two that night, and the rest a day or two after: tho I believe several of them might have been sav'd, if the Captains that belong'd to them had used their utmost Care. For during the

whole Retreat, I kept quite in the Rear of the Fleet, and stopt several half, and one whole windward Tide to protect them. And notwithstanding the Reports, that the Sovereign was not engag'd, there is not a Third of the Ships in the Fleet, of Dutch and English, that have lost so many Men by the Enemy's shot.

I now beg leave to answer such Objections, as I hear have been made.

First, *That it is wonder'd I made a Gap in our Line.*

I did it because our Line was shorter than the Enemy's; and because in the posture the Enemy lay, I thought it less dangerous to have an Interval near the Center, than leaving either the Van or Rear uncover'd, and by it giving the Enemy an immediate Opportunity to weather us.

Secondly, *Why I steer'd to the Southward after I had made the Signal for Battel.*

For

For several Reasons: First, to make the Interval in the middle. Secondly, to place my self opposite to the Center of the Enemy's Fleet, or rather a little more in the Rear; and the better to bring the Blue to engage the Rear of the Enemy's Fleet, in order to force them down: For they lay so far Weatherly, that till that was done I could not engage close with the Body of the Enemy, without exposing my self to the danger of being weather'd by all the Rear of the French Fleet.

Thirdly, That if I had fought closer, the French could not have weather'd us.

'Tis possible I might think so too, if by Experience I did not know the contrary: For in the *St. James's Day* Fight, in the first Dutch War, *Trump* weather'd a great part of the Blue, notwithstanding the Opposition of the rest, and that the White and Red had beaten the Van and Body of the Dutch.

Dutch. He weather'd Sir John Kempthorne amongst the rest, to whom I was then Lieutenant, and laid a Fire-ship on board the *Resolution*, that was our Second, and burnt her. This Action would in all probability have been fatal to us, if we had not given way. If this could be done to us, when we were equal in Number of Ships, and superior in the Goodness of our Ships; the Case holds stronger, where the Enemy had a Third more in Number, and many bigger Ships. If this be a Fault, I have acquir'd it by Experience.

Fourthly, *Why I did not pass to Westward of the French Fleet?*

To that I answer, That I intended it, as appears by my Letter of the 26th of June; and 'tis as true, that we never had an Opportunity to do it, without engaging the French, contrary to the Unanimous Opinion of the Council of War.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, *Why I made the Signal of Battel, before I was near enough to engage my self.*

Because the *Dutch* were in fit distance to engage, and to shew them I would have them keep up with the headmost Ships of the *Enemy*; as is express'd more at large in the *Relation of the Battel.*

Sixthly, *Why I did not go sooner down to the Fleet.*

Because I was commanded to stay for my *Instructions*, and that they were not sign'd till the 26th of *May*, nor deliver'd me till the 29th; and the 30th I got to the *Downs*, the place of *Rendezvous*: and that was within very few days after the great Ships came there.

Seventhly, *The dispersing of the Fleet, I hear, is laid to my Charge.*

To

To shew the contrary, I will begin with *Killigrew*. I did not so much as know his Orders till I came to *St. Hellens*, that the E. of *Nottingham* sent me a Copy of his Orders. *Sir Cloudesly Shovell* had but few Ships, and every body knows was attending his Majesty's Person. And for *Captain Saunders*, I did not so much as know his Station till the 16th of *June*, that the Lords of the Admiralty sent me word he was order'd S. S. W. 30 Leagues from *Scilly*. I confess it is one of the last places I should have sent to look him in, in a known War with *France*. If it be true that he was design'd to protect our Merchant-Ships in their Return home, it looks to me as improper a Station, as if a Guard should be sent to *Hounslow*, to secure Passengers from being rob'd upon *Putney-Heath*.

Eighthly,

oT

Eighthly, Some People say, if we had fought closer, we should have beaten the French.

I wonder upon what it is they ground their Opinion. If they have Reasons for it, I must confess they are above my Comprehension: for if we go to matter of fact, the *Dutch* and those other Ships that fought longest and closest to the Enemy, were most disabled, nay were almost all disabled, and no sign of Damage appear'd on the *French* side: And yet I am sure they cannot make out, that either the Gap in our Line, or our not bearing down close to the Enemy at first, brought any more of the Enemy's Ships upon them than came to their share, considering the Number of the *French*. If that be so, as certainly it must, unless they can trump up a Gap in the *French* Line, which I have not heard any body yet pretend to; from what reason do
 F they

they draw their Conclusion? I am sure, that if I had acted otherwise than I did, the whole Fleet had been ruin'd, and I wholly inexcusable; for I had lost the Wind, contrary to the Results of the Council of War, which was, That we shou'd by all manner of means shun fighting the Enemy, if they have the Wind of us. If by all manner of means we are to shun fighting the Enemy, if they have the Wind of us, according to my Philosophy, we are by all manner of means to preserve it during the Battel. Had I made one step towards losing the Wind, I had not only acted contrary to the unanimous declar'd Opinion of the Council of War, but contrary to my own Judgment declar'd under my Hand. What Reflections that might have drawn upon me, I humbly submit to the Judgment of this Honourable House.

Lastly,

Lastly, *I remember but one thing more that I am blam'd for ; and that is, not calling all the Captains to the Council of War : I am sure it was no Disrespect to them, for there are many Men of Merit among them.*

To this I have two Answers : The first is, That in Twenty seven Years that I have serv'd at Sea, I never knew it practis'd in this Kingdom, or any other. The second is, That if it had been my Intention, it was not in my power : for by the Treaty of Agreement with the *Dutch*, the Fleet is to be govern'd by an equal Number of Flag-Officers of both sides ; and in case they differ, so as to be equally divided, then the Captains of both sides are to be call'd in.

I hear that, for my Ruin, there is great use made of the Allies being dissatisfy'd. I wou'd fain know what it is they are dissatisfy'd in, or what

Satisfaction my Ruin can be to them ; I think them too reasonable to desire it. Were they so ill-natur'd, surely Prince *Waldeck* wou'd not be so favourably dealt with, who lost a Battel much at the same time. Nor is it a new thing for them to suffer by the *French*, witness *Messina* and *Palermo* under *De Ruyter*, the greatest Seaman of his Age. Some say the *Spanish* General's Behaviour was complain'd of by the *Dutch* : but I never heard, that the *Spaniards* complain'd of their General to the *Dutch* ; nor that the *French* made any Complaint of Monsieur *d'Estree* to us, tho we found great fault with him : possibly they wanted so worthy and qualify'd a Secretary as we have, to set it forth as he did in his Letter to my Lord *Dursley* ; which for the extraordinary Stile, I annex to this Paper : I am only sorry that I am not Master enough of the *French* Language to translate it into *English*.
There

There are Expressions in it, which he had as little Authority to make use of, as there is Truth in the Contents of the Letter. It was all pure Inspiration; for it was dated some days before the Return of those Noble * Lords that came aboard at *Dover*; nay, one day before they reach'd the Fleet: for the Letter bears date the 4th of *July*, and they did not get aboard till the 5th. Nor do I believe that those Noble Lords, at their Return, said any thing like it to him; for I cannot think they went off with such an Opinion. They told me so, and I believ'd them: for if it is true that they had power to remove me, if they saw cause; and if they had seen cause, and did not, they wou'd have no excuse for leaving me at the head of the Fleet, especially when the Enemy was so near.

* *D. of Devonshire, and E. of Pembroke.*

And

And because I have been misunderstood by some Members of the House, I beg leave to explain what I said in relation to the *Dutch* in the Battel. I never imputed it to want of Courage; for I conclude that it was their Courage that led them into the Snare the *French* had laid for them, and their Ships were too weak to support them in it: And that they would always be beaten by that Enemy, and we too, till we arm out a proportionable Strength to theirs. I say no more upon these several Heads, because I will keep strict to the Rule I have laid down, not to reflect on any, but what is absolutely necessary for my Country's Safety, and my own Justification; and have said so much, because all the Mis-carriages or Mismanagements here laid down, have been laid directly or obliquely to my Charge.

That our Allies, if they are incens'd, were incens'd by the Author
of

of the Letter, may be reasonably concluded from the Stile of it ; for I am sure many of the *Dutch* did own, that it is certainly true, that but for me they had been Prisoners to the *French*. If my Commission was superseded, by granting a new Commission to another Person before I fought (as I appeal to the Lords of the Admiralty whether it was not) may it not be infer'd, that my pretended ill Conduct in the Battel, which at present is laid to my charge, is not the true Cause of my present Misfortunes ?

I will not confine any Man's Judgment to mine, but I am very ready to reason the point of Conduct in the Battel with any man : but this I may be bold to say, That I have had time enough and cause enough to think of it ; and that upon my word were the Battel to be fought over again, I do not know how to mend it, under the same Circumstances. If

*If after twenty seven years Service at Sea, and being in more Battels, and losing more Blood than any Gentleman in *England*, I can be suspected of Cowardice; and if after having lost so considerable Preferments (when I had nothing else to trust to) rather than consent to the taking off the Penal Laws and the Test, the Bulwarks of our Religion and Liberties; and if after the share I had in the late happy Revolution, and the Honour and Establishment their Majestys have been graciously pleas'd to confer upon me, my Integrity to my Country can be suspected; what is it can secure any man's Reputation or Good-Name?

Upon the whole Matter of Fact, all which I am able to make good, I submit my self to the Consideration of this Honourable House, whether the ill Success of the late Fight and Fleet, is to be imputed to my
ill

ill Conduct, or the ill Management of other Persons, in the above-mention'd particulars; and whether I have not just reason to think that the Persons, who were guilty of those Mismanagements (to call them no worse) are not the Persons, who set on foot my Prosecution, to excuse themselves, by laying the fault on me, which ought to be ascrib'd to them. I hope this Honourable House will put this matter in a way of Examination, as may be full, clear, open, and publick; that their Majesties may know the true reason, why the Fleet had not that Success, as was by their Majesties and all good Men desir'd.

G

The

The Guns in the *English* and *Dutch* Fleet, } in 1690—3592.
 } in 1692—7080.

In the Year 1690.
 the *English* Fleet consisted of

In the Year 1692.
English and *Dutch* Ships.

<i>English.</i>		<i>English.</i>	
Rates.	N ^o	Rates.	N ^o
First ———	2.	First ———	6.
Second ———	6.	Second ———	10.
Third ———	22.	Third ———	34.
Fourth ———	4.	Fourth ———	15.
<i>Dutch.</i>		<i>Dutch.</i>	
Rates.	N ^o	Rates.	N ^o
First ———	2.	First ———	9.
Second ———	0.	Second ———	10.
Third ———	12.	Third ———	9.
Fourth ———	8.	Fourth ———	8.

More in 1692 than 1690.

Rates.	N ^o
First ———	11.
Second ———	14.
Third ———	9.
Fourth ———	11.
	45.

Difference in Number of Guns—3488.

The *French* were—82 in 1690.

And but ————44 in 1692.

Lettre

LETTRE du Comte de Nottingham, écrite par Ordre de la Reyne, à my Lord Dursley.

A Whitehall le 14 Juillet, 1690.

My LORD,

‘ J’Ay reçu la vostre du 10 du
 ‘ courant, & Je suis bien aise de
 ‘ voir que les Estats Generaux sont
 ‘ si prompts à concourir avec nous
 ‘ pour la Sureté commune. Cette
 ‘ Disposition est devenue a cette
 ‘ heure plus necessaire, par le mal-
 ‘ heureux Succes du Combat, qui
 ‘ se donna Lundy dernier, 10 de ce
 ‘ mois, entre les deux Flottes ; dans
 ‘ lequel l’Escadre de Hollande se

' comporta avec tant de bravoure,
 ' que si my Lord *Torrington* eut fait
 ' son devoir, nous aurions, selon
 ' toute apparence, remporté une en-
 ' tiere Victoire. Mais presentement
 ' nous nous retirons devant l'Enne-
 ' my ; & j'apprens de la Cofte, que
 ' les Flottes se sont effoignees de
 ' *Beachy*, ou le Combat commença,
 ' & se trouvent presentement entre
 ' *Hastings* & *Douvres*, dans un lieu
 ' qu'on nomme le *Nesse*. Les *Hollan-*
 ' *dois* ont perdue trois Vaisseaux, des-
 ' quels l'un fut pris & brulé par l'En-
 ' nemy, & deux s'estant sauvez dans
 ' la Rade de *Hastings* furent brulez par
 ' leurs propres Equipages pour em-
 ' pescher qu'ils ne tombassent entre
 ' les mains des Ennemis : il y a
 ' encore cinque ou six de leur Esca-
 ' dre hors de Combat. *Brakell*, *Jean*
 ' *Dick*, & *Noorthiel* sont tuez. Nous
 ' avons perdu deux Capitains, &
 ' avons seulement deux ou trois
 ' Vaisseaux hors d'estat de servir,
 ' Enfin,

‘ Enfin, my Lord, j’ay honte de
 ‘ continuer à écrire sur ce Sujet, &
 ‘ je ne vous en entretiendray pas
 ‘ plus amplement, parce que la
 ‘ Reyne a dessein de depescher Mr.
 ‘ *Harbort* demain vers les Estats :
 ‘ Mais si vous recevez celle-cy avant
 ‘ son arrivée, il faut que vous re-
 ‘ presentiez comme vous pourrez
 ‘ une si mechante Affaire ; de la
 ‘ quelle, par les meilleurs avis que
 ‘ je puis avoir, le seul Comte de
 ‘ *Torrington* est entierement coupable.
 ‘ La Reyne en fait paroistre un si
 ‘ grand resentiment, & tout le
 ‘ mond icy paroist si indigné contre
 ‘ luy pour ce qu’il a fait, que les
 ‘ Etats verront bien-tot que Ven-
 ‘ geance en sera fait sur luy ; & que
 ‘ si les dits Etats Generaux veulent
 ‘ concourir avec nous, elle se pourra
 ‘ estendre sur nos Ennemis aussi, car
 ‘ nous equipons avec diligence tous
 ‘ les Vaisseaux qui sont en quelque
 ‘ façon prests, & nous esperons que
 ‘ les

' les Etats feront la meme chose.
 ' Et je ne doute pas, que peu de
 ' jours nous aurons une meilleure
 ' Flotte en Mer, avec une meilleure
 ' Admiral ; & alors nous pourrons
 ' avec raison nous promettre que nos
 ' Ennemis non seulement ne nous
 ' causeront pas de dommage, mais
 ' ne paroistrent pas devant nous sur
 ' nos Costes ; car tous les Officiers
 ' & les Matelots de nostre Flotte
 ' sont enragez de cette Conduite de
 ' my Lord Torrington. Et puis qu'on
 ' a tant parlè qu'il y avoit des Ca-
 ' pitains de nostre Flotte, qui ne
 ' s'aquitteroient pas de leur devoir,
 ' il faut vous dire que le Capt. *Bo-*
 ' *cham*, qui estoit le plus soupçoné,
 ' s'est comporté avec tant de Cou-
 ' rage & de Fidelité, qu'il á perdu
 ' la Vie dans cette Action. Nous
 ' sommes prêts a raccommo-der tous
 ' les Vaisseaux *Hollandois* avec toute
 ' la diligence possible, & nous avons
 ' donné tous les Ordres nécessaires
 ' pour

‘ pour avoir soin de leurs bleſſez,
 ‘ & ceux qui vinrent à terre du bord
 ‘ des Vaiſſeaux qui furent brulez,
 ‘ ſeront fournis d’Argent, & conduits
 ‘ à *Chatham*, ou ils ſeront nourris &
 ‘ entretenus ſur nos Vaiſſeaux, juſqu’à
 ‘ ce que l’Amiral *Evertz* en puiſſe
 ‘ diſpoſer autrement. Un chacun
 ‘ en a une ſi grand compaſſion &
 ‘ témoigne tant d’affection pour la
 ‘ Nation *Hollandois* en general, que
 ‘ ſi les Etats prennent cette matiere
 ‘ comme il faut, quelque mal-heu-
 ‘ reuſe qu’elle paroiſſe pour le pre-
 ‘ ſent, je ne doute pas que cette
 ‘ affair meme ne ſoit l’occaſion de la
 ‘ plus grand Amitié & Union qui ait
 ‘ jamais eſté entre ces deux Nations,
 ‘ ou aucuns autres ; & dans cette
 ‘ conjuncture, cela eſt abſolument
 ‘ neceſſaire pour noſtre Seureté com-
 ‘ mune. Je ne ſaurois vous donner
 ‘ un detail exact du dommage des
 ‘ François, mais ſans doute ils en
 ‘ auront ſoufert ; & le Chevalier
 ‘ *Holmes*,

‘ Holmes m’ecrit de l’Isle de Wight,
‘ qu’il a vû passer un gros Vaisseau
‘ François fort delabré, qui s’en re-
‘ tournoit à Brest ; & d’autres disent
‘ qu’ils en ont vû cinq ou six autres
‘ faisant la même route, & neuf ou
‘ dix de nos Vaisseaux de Guerre,
‘ qui venoient de Plymouth à Ports-
‘ mouth, pour joindre la Flotte, les
‘ ont recontrez, & le Chevalier
‘ Holmes mande qu’il les pouvoit
‘ voir fort proche de ce gros Vais-
‘ seau François. Je suis,

My LORD,

Vostre tres-humble Serviteur.

Signé, Nottingham.

The

*The Earl of Nottingham's Letter,
writ by the Queen's Order,
to my Lord Dursly:*

Whitehall, 14 July 1690.

My LORD,

I HAVE receiv'd yours of the 10th instant, and am glad to find that the States General are so ready to concur with us for the common Safety. At present this Disposition is become more necessary by the unfortunate Success of the Engagement between the two Fleets last Monday the 10th of this Month;

H

in

in which the *Dutch Squadron* shew'd so much Bravery, that if my Lord *Torrington* had done his Duty, we shou'd, in all appearance, have obtain'd a compleat Victory: But now we retreat from before the Enemy; and I'm inform'd from the Coast, that the Fleets have stood away from *Beachy* where the Fight began, and are at present between *Hastings* and *Dover* in a place call'd the *Nesse*. The *Dutch* have lost three Ships; one of which was taken and burnt by the Enemy, and the other two having escap'd in the *Hastings-Road*, were set on fire to prevent their falling into the Enemy's hands. There are five or six remaining that have escap'd the Engagement. *Brakell*, *John Dick*, and *Noorthiel* are kill'd. We have lost two Captains, and have but two or three Ships disabled. In fine, my Lord, I'm asham'd to continue writing on this Subject, and will trouble you no further with it,

it, because her Majesty intends to
 dispatch Mr. Harbort to morrow to
 the States: But if you receive this
 before his arrival, you are to re-
 present as you can this unhappy Af-
 fair; which, according to the best
 Information I can get, is wholly to
 be imputed to my Lord Torrington.
 The Queen has shewn so great a
 Resentment of it, and every body
 here appears so full of Anger a-
 gainst him for what he has done,
 that the States General will soon
 see Vengeance taken of him: and
 if they will join with us, it may
 be extended to our Enemy's too;
 for we are fitting out all the Ships
 that are in any condition of serv-
 ing, and hope the States will do
 the same. And I do not doubt we
 shall in a few days have a better
 Fleet under a better Admiral; and
 then we reasonably presume, that
 the Enemy will not only be unable

to do us any damage, but will not dare to meet us on our Coast: for all the Officers and Men of our Fleet are enrag'd at this Conduct of my Lord Torrington. And because it has been so much reported that there were some of our Captains who fail'd of doing their Duty, it is requisite to let you know that Captain Bocham, who was the most suspected, behav'd himself with such Courage and Honour, that he lost his Life in the Action. We are ready to resit all the Dutch Ships with all possible diligence, and have given the necessary Orders for taking care of their Wounded, and such as come ashore out of the Ships which have been burnt, shall be furnish'd with Money, and conducted to Chatham, where they shall be taken care of, and receiv'd on board of our Ships, till Admiral Evertz can otherwise dispose of them. All People
 H have

have so much Compassion of them, and express so much Affection for the Dutch Nation in general, that if the States take this matter right, as unhappy as it may seem for the present, I make no question but this very Affair will be the Occasion of the greatest Amity and Union that has ever yet been between these two Nations, or any others: and in the present Conjunction, this seems absolutely necessary for our common Safety. I cannot give you an exact particular of the *French* Loss, but there is no doubt they have suffer'd in the Engagement; and Sir *Holmes* has writ to me from the Isle of *Wight*, that he saw a great *French* Ship pass by much shatter'd, which made towards *Brest*: and others say they have seen five or six others making the same way, and nine or ten of our Men of War, which came from *Plymouth* to *Portsmouth* to join
the

the Fleet, met with them; and Sir
John Holmes sends word, that he
could see them very near this great
French Ship. I am,

My Lord,

Your most Humble Servant.

Sign'd,

Nottingham.

It is necessary for our common
Safety, I cannot give you an exact
particular of the French Loss, but
there is no doubt they have tinn'd
in the Engagement; and Sir . . .

~~Robert has writ to me from the 11th~~
of Night, that he saw a great French
Ship pass by much flatter'd, which
made towards Brest; and others say
they have seen five or six others
making the same way, and nine or
ten of our Men of War, which came
from Plymouth to Portsmouth to join
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